

Phoenix Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	507939
Inspection date	19/03/2009
Inspector	George Rayner

Setting address	Riders Infant School, Kingsclere Avenue, Leigh Park, Havant, Hampshire, PO9 4RY
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Telephone number	023 92498500
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Phoenix pre-school opened in 1981 and is included on the Early Years Register. It operates from two classrooms within Riders Infant School. Situated in Leigh Park, Portsmouth, the pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. Children have an enclosed outdoor play area for their exclusive use and also use the school hall for some activities. The pre-school is managed by a voluntary committee, made up of parents and carers. There are currently 57 children from two years nine months on the register, 56 of whom receive funding for nursery education. The maximum number of children who attend any session is 26. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and welcomes those who speak English as an additional language. The pre-school opens for 10 sessions a week during term times. These are each weekday from 08.50 – 11.45 and 12.00 – 15.00. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The committee employs a qualified manager, who is responsible for day to day running of the setting and nine other staff, who work with children across the sessions. One person has a relevant National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 4, four have Level 3 and five have Level 2. Several staff are currently working towards extending their qualifications further. The pre-school is situated in a Sure Start area and has close links with this and several other agencies, the school in which it is based and other early years settings. It receives support, for example equipment and training, from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Provision to promote inclusive practice is outstanding. It is highly effective in ensuring that all children are very secure and happy in the pre-school. They have their individual needs met by the well qualified and committed staff team. Staff have a good knowledge of each child who attends. Children make good progress as staff plan effective opportunities for them to develop in each area of learning. Provision to promote continuous improvement is good. In making their well-considered improvements, managers take into account recommendations made by the local authority, previous inspections, parents and their own increasingly effective self-evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- increase the number and variety of signs that children see indoors and outdoors to help them to quickly recognise and use written words and symbols
- improve the system for passing on information to the schools that children move to so that this is consistently detailed in all areas of their learning and development

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Systems for self-evaluation are still developing, but are doing so well. They are providing an accurate picture of strengths and areas needing improvement. The managers are reflective in their approach. For example, they have been thinking about how they could cater better for the different ways that boys and girls like to learn. They have added to resources by providing toy tools, intended to appeal particularly to boys. They are pleased that these are encouraging boys to think about improving, repairing and solving problems. Observations during the inspection show that this has also improved provision for girls, because many also enjoy using the tools, for example to repair their make-believe ship. Staffing ratios are good, staff are well qualified and managers encourage them to add further to their qualifications. Previously there was insufficient sharing of responsibilities between staff, but managers are now beginning to distribute leadership roles more widely.

Procedures to ensure children's safety are extremely very well organised. Safe recruitment procedures and risk assessments are comprehensive and carefully recorded. All staff know these well, are very well trained to carry them out and do so with great diligence. A further strength is the outstanding partnership with parents and carers. They are regularly consulted on their children's particular needs, difficulties, likes and dislikes. Parents say that they feel exceptionally well included as partners in providing the very best for their children and are made to feel that this is highly valued by the staff. They say that this is an important reason why the pre-school is so popular and well subscribed. Staff report back to parents very well on the progress that their children are making. The system for passing on information to infant schools when children move on provides good detail about some aspects of children's development, but not about others. Therefore it does not give a complete picture of each child's achievements to help ensure good continuity of provision in all areas. Managers are aware of this and intend improve the system, although this is yet to be done.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff have a good knowledge of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They plan effectively to help children's progress towards all of the early learning goals. Where they have identified gaps, they have filled these well. For example, they introduced simple cooking activities, which children greatly enjoy. These succeed well in helping them to develop creative and problem solving skills. To make sure that provision meets each child's needs well, staff carefully observe and record each one's developing achievements. The adults ensure that each child has a very good balance of careful supervision with opportunities to do things independently.

Children enter the pre-school eagerly and leave their parent or carer happily. Staff ensure that every child quickly gets down to enjoyable and worthwhile activity and children cooperate fully in this. A good variety of activities, both inside and outdoors ensures that children continue to be interested throughout the session.

Prompts such as simple signs to help children to become familiar with words, numbers and symbols, are limited, particularly outdoors. The outdoor area is used well to provide opportunities for children to learn by playing and exploring. Several enjoyed experimenting to see what patterns they could make with water, while learning to do so responsibly so that this did not interfere with what others were doing. Refreshment arrangements have been recently revised, with a system organised as a snack bar. This lets children choose for themselves when to snack and which friends they will do this with. This further promotes their independence in making decisions and means that if they are engrossed in an activity they do not have to break off until ready to do so. Children make friends easily and they and the staff really enjoy sharing celebrations for events such as birthdays.

All in the pre-school care exceptionally well for the children. Adults are extremely solicitous in guiding each child to act in a safe and healthy way. This is done very well, by asking the children to think of the likely consequences of their actions rather than simply telling them what they are to do. This works very well in helping children to develop their own good habits in for example, handling equipment safely and washing their hands when it is important to do so. Outstanding provision for individual needs includes that for the small number who are at an early stage of learning to speak English, or with physical disabilities and learning difficulties. These children are fully involved in all activities and others willingly help by, for example, making sure that they have a fair share of equipment. The pre-school works extremely well with a range of specialist agencies to provide high quality additional support for children or guidance for staff when this is necessary. Children's exceptional response to the encouragement they receive to take responsibility for themselves and care for one another, reflects their excellent contribution to the success of the pre-school as a close-knit and happy place to be.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since the last inspection. The complaint required the provider to take action. Concerns were raised regarding an accident at the setting. We asked the provider to conduct an investigation and provide a report of the accident. A response was received from the provider. From a review of the response and further information received the provider had not notified Ofsted of the accident. The provider has taken appropriate action to ensure Ofsted is notified of any significant events in the future. We took no further action and the provider remained suitable for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.